

(DISTAD ADA VETOED PRICE CONTROL LEGISLATION)

SAIPAN, NOV. 22 (MNS)²⁴—THE CONTROVERSIAL MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE REGARDING PRICE CONTROL IN THE MARIANAS HAS BEEN VETOED BY MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR FRANCISCO C. ADA, ACCORDING TO THE RECENT ISSUE OF MARIANAS VARIETY NEWS AND VIEWS, SAIPAN'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER.

IN A LETTER TO SAIPAN MAYOR VICENTE D. SABLAN, ADA STATED THAT "THE MARK UP OF 10 PERCENT OVER LANDED COST FOR MERCHANTS AT RETAIL LEVEL AND IMPORTERS AND RETAILERS WILL NOT REALIZE A MARGIN TO SUBSTANTIATE CONTINUED BUSINESS OPERATION.

HE CONTINUED, "IF THIS ORDINANCE IS TO BECOME A LAW, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CERTAINLY HAVE TO SUBSIDIZE THE ESTABLISHMENTS."

FURTHERMORE, HE NOTED, "THE BOARD MEMBERSHIP IS RATHER LIMITED, THE BUSINESS SECTOR IS COMPLETELY LEFT OUT. I BELIEVE THAT A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE PRICE CONTROL BOARD SO THE PROCESS OF CHECKS AND BALANCE IS IN ORDER."

DISTAD ADA "RECOMMENDED THAT THE COUNCIL IN ITS MARCH SESSION DECIDE TO CREATE A CONSUMER LIVING COUNCIL TO MONITOR PRICE."

THE ORDINANCE, PASSED ON OCTOBER 4TH WOULD HAVE LEVIED PRICE CONTROL ON STAPLE COMMODITIES SUCH AS RICE, FLOUR, FUEL, BEEF, ETC., AND NEGATIVE RECEPTION HAS BEEN OPENLY PROJECTED BY THE BUSINESS SECTOR OF SAIPAN.

THE THREE LEADING COMMODITY SUPPLIERS ON SAIPAN, J.C. TENORIO ENTERPRISES, M.S. VILLAGOMEZ ENTERPRISES AND TOWN HOUSE, ALL VOICED STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE ORDINANCE.

IN A NOVEMBER 11 LETTER TO DISTAD ADA, THEY REGISTERED DISAGREEMENT WITH SECTION 2 OF THE ORDINANCE WHICH STATES..." A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF SUCH (PRICE) INCREASES ARE ALSO CAUSED BY THE INCREASING PROFITS TAKEN BY THE VENDORS OF SUCH COMMODITIES."

THE THREE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS STATED "WE BELIEVE WHOLEHEARTEDLY IN THE FREE ENTERPRISE, COMPETITIVE PRICING SYSTEM AS THE BEST AND ONLY EFFECTIVE WAY TO CONTROL RETAIL PRICES. WE ARE ALSO FIRMLY OF THE BELIEF THAT SUCH COMPETITION EXISTS HERE ON SAIPAN. REGULAR PRICES IN OUR STORES COMPARE VERY FAVORABLY WITH THE REGULAR PRICES ADVERTISED FOR GUAM AND YET WE HAVE TO PAY MUCH HIGHER SHIPPING COSTS AND DO NOT HAVE THE VOLUME BUYING BENEFITS POSSIBLE DUE TO GUAM'S MUCH LARGER POPULATION."

THE THREE MERCHANTS STATED THAT PASSAGE OF THE ORDINANCE WOULD IRONICALLY "RESULT IN HIGHER PRICES AND SHORT SUPPLY ON SAIPAN BECAUSE IT WOULD DEPRIVE LOCAL MERCHANTS OF INCENTIVE TO BUY AT THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS PRICE AT SOURCE."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SAIPAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, DAVID M. SABLAN, ALSO WROTE A LETTER TO DISTAD ADA (NOV. 29) CITING HIGH PRICES RESULTING IN HIGHER SHIPPING COSTS AS A REASON FOR THE HIGH PRICE OF STAPLE ITEMS. HE RECOMMENDED THAT, "RATHER THAN A PRICE CONTROL BOARD...APPOINT A COST OF LIVING COUNCIL TO PROVIDE...FACTS RELATIVE TO WAGES, INDIVIDUAL BUYING POWER AND A COST ANALYSIS OF GOODS, PARTICULARLY FOOD ITEMS AND THAT AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE (LOCAL) AGRICULTURE COMMERCIALY WOULD BE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

FURTHER REGISTERING OF DISAPPROVAL OF THE ORDINANCE CAME FROM PEDRO Q. DELA CRUZ, CHAIRMAN OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

(TENORIO RECOUNT REQUEST DENIED)

SAIPAN, NOV. 22 (MNS)---INCUMBENT CONGRESSMAN PEDRO P. TENORIO, THE ONLY TERRITORIAL PARTY LOSER IN THE RECENT CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA ELECTION IN THE MARIANAS, HAS BEEN DENIED HIS

PETITION FOR A RECOUNT, ACCORDING TO FRIDAY'S PACIFIC DAILY NEWS.

CONG. TENORIO, WHO LOST HIS SEAT BY FOUR VOTES TO POPULAR PARTY CHALLENGER HERMAN P. GUERRERO, FILED HIS PETITION A DAY AFTER THE TWO-WEEK DEADLINE TUESDAY (NOV. 19).

IN A LETTER TO TENORIO DENYING HIS REQUEST, MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR FRANCISCO C. ADA, ELECTION COMMISSIONER, SAID TENORIO DID NOT FILE HIS PETITION WITHIN THE TIME SPECIFIED IN THE TRUST TERRITORY CODE.

ADA ALSO SAID THE PETITION "DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT ELECTION PRECINCT YOU BELIEVE TO BE IN ERROR OR WHETHER THE ERROR WAS IN THE ACTUAL COUNTING OF THE VOTES, THE COUNTING AND TABULATING COMMITTEE...ON THE PART OF THE PRECINCT OFFICIALS IN LOSING OR DESTROYING BALLOTS."

"FOR THE ABOVE REASONS, I FEEL THAT YOUR PETITION FOR A RECOUNT DOES NOT WARRANT MY ORDERING SUCH A MOVE," ADA SAID.

TENORIO HAS FIVE DAYS AFTER RECEIVING THE LETTER TO APPEAL DISTAD ADA'S DECISION TO THE DISTRICT COURT, THE LETTER SAYS.

CONGRESSMAN TENORIO INDICATED HE IS CONSULTING WITH HIS PARTY TO DETERMINE WHETHER HE WILL APPEAL ADA'S RULING, THE DAILY NEWS STORY STATED.